

SUFFOLK COUNTY CHESS ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Suffolk County Chess Association, held at the Ipswich Institute on Tuesday 30 May 2017: 7:30 pm

Present –

Rob Sanders (RS): Sudbury
John McAllister (JM), Jim Buis (JB), Adrian Sanderson (AS), Leon Burnett (LB), Andy Lewis (AL): Manningtree
Ted Mathewson (TM), Kevin Greenacre (KG), Simon Riley (SR), Angus Irving (AI), Alonso Paez (AP): Ipswich
Dave Wild (DW), Ed Kirkham (EK): Felixstowe
David Green (DG), Stephen Lewis (SL): Stowmarket
David Wood (DWO), Bob Jones (BJ): Bury St Edmunds
John Feavoyour (JF): Saxmundham

1. Apologies for absence

Received from –

Stephen Gregory (SG): Ipswich
Peter Collicott (PC), Malcolm Lightfoot (ML): Saxmundham
Bob Stephens (BS), Phil Hutchings (PH) – Manningtree
John Peters (JP), Steve Lovell (SL), Steve Ruthen (SR): Bury St Edmunds
John Lambert (JL), Melvin Steele (ML): Clacton on Sea
Vicky Allen (VA): Stowmarket
Dave Robertson (DR): Felixstowe

2. Minutes of the last SCCA AGM held on 7 June 2016

BJ asked if there were any queries resulting from these – none.

Vote – all in favour of accepting the minutes.

3. Matters Arising

BJ confirmed the minutes from the 2016 SCCA AGM had been sent out after the AGM had been held and had also been resent in the last couple of weeks to clubs.

No other matters arising.

4. Election of Officers

A nomination had been received for the following post –

Suffolk Junior Chess Organiser – Tim Kent (TK), who is the father of Rowan Kent (Woodbridge School and Bury Knights JCC).

Vote – all in favour of this appointment.

BJ mentioned SCCA still looking for volunteers for U100, U120 and U140 Captains.

5. Officers' reports

5.1 President (BJ)

BJ said this was his second year as County President and it had been a fairly straightforward year.

He was pleased to report that a new chess club had started in Woodbridge (organiser is Blake Gifford) and things were going well with 10 – 12 regulars and they were hoping to enter a team into the Suffolk League; BJ had visited the club during the season to meet Blake and other club players.

BJ also said it was encouraging to report the re-emergence of Ipswich Junior Chess Club under the organisation of Martin Tomes; Ipswich JCC meets on Saturday mornings at Ipswich Central Library.

It was also very good news that TK had volunteered to be the Suffolk Junior Chess Organiser as this post had been unfilled for some years.

The 2016 – 2017 season had been very successful for the Manningtree Chess Club as they had won a number of league and cup events and BJ congratulated them on an excellent season.

BJ said he was sorry that VA was standing down after being Suffolk Ladies Chess Organiser for many years; VA had been Suffolk Ladies Champion on many occasions over the years as well as being on the County Committee and BJ thanked her for all her contributions to chess in the county. BJ said he hoped another lady would step up to replace VA but as so few ladies play chess in Suffolk, he accepted it would be difficult to fill this post.

2017 – 2018 will be BJ's third and final year as County President and will see the possible tweaking of some rules as well as hopefully seeing the Suffolk League move towards the introduction of incremental timing limits.

Finally, BJ thanked all the Committee Members for their contributions during the last year and wished the Suffolk County First Team well for their upcoming Semi-Final match against Leicestershire in the Finals Stages of the Minor Counties Chess event; there was also the possibility of a Suffolk versus Norfolk final, depending on both counties winning their respective Semi-Finals.

5.2 Vice President (LB)

LB said he had been doing some work on seeing whether Suffolk should introduce a Safeguarding Children Policy; this is something the English Chess Federation has introduced and is designed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people up to the age of 18. Details may be found on the ECF website.

LB said he had looked at other counties to see whether they had their own Safeguarding Children Policy; several did but there was some variation.

For example, Sussex had quite an extensive Policy in place whereas Oxfordshire had quite a brief Policy. Hertfordshire had adopted the ECF's own Policy; LB had most recently looked at Essex, which again had quite an extensive Policy. LB said he thought Suffolk would run the risk of falling behind other counties if we do nothing.

He wondered whether a Policy may be required for insurance purposes and without a Policy being in place, there was always the worry that if a scandal was uncovered, the county could be placed in a difficult situation. For these reasons and others, LB recommended that Suffolk should consider introducing a Safeguarding Children Policy.

LB had also noticed that clubs within counties had also introduced their own Policy and wondered whether member clubs of the SCCA should consider this – quite a lot of these clubs within other counties were clubs within schools.

LB also asked whether the SCCA should consider appointing a Safeguarding Children Officer; some other counties have such a post although others may not.

The subject of introducing a Safeguarding Children Policy was opened for discussion amongst the attendees of the AGM.

Everyone was in agreement the SCCA should have a Policy.

DG thought some of the other Policies seemed to be very complex. His own club of Stowmarket does have Policy in place but as parents of children playing chess were present, there was not a safeguarding situation.

Appendix 2 of the ECF Policy ran to around 30 bullet points and was very lengthy.

AL asked if details of the Essex policy were available as this had been previously mentioned as being quite detailed. LB said it ran to around a page and a half and followed the ECF Policy; they do have a Safeguarding Officer and his / her contact details are available.

BJ asked what the duties of a Safeguarding Officer might be.

LB said the Sussex Policy does have some points for a Safeguarding Officer to be responsible for; these relate to children and young people being safeguarded in line with the national, legal requirements.

TM asked whether there are any legal implications for not having a Safeguarding Officer; also to encourage uniformity between County Associations, should the SCCA be following the ECF Policy.

LB said he supported TM's views; the ECF Policy is lengthy so he suggested the SCCA should concentrate on the main bullet points in the ECF Safeguarding Policy.

The attendees supported the introduction of such a Policy; BJ wondered could the SCCA follow the ECF Policy, DG asked if this was done, would the SCCA follow the ECF Policy in its entirety. BJ said as the ECF must have taken legal advice, why would the SCCA need to change anything. TM thought it was a good idea for a Safeguarding Officer to be added to the Committee and BJ wondered if this might be a role for LB to take on, in addition to his Vice-Chairmanship. LB said that as Suffolk now had a Junior Chess Organiser, he felt it was important to have a Policy in place.

It was agreed that BJ and LB would arrange to get together before the start of the 2017 – 2018 season to consider the matter further with a view to drafting a Safeguarding Children Policy for the SCCA to adopt.

LB asked if individual clubs had considered this matter. SL said that there is something in place at a local cricket club but this was not perhaps quite the same.

JF said that he thought there would normally be no problems when children play chess but clearly we do not want any potential problems in the future.

BJ suggested that the SCCA draws up a Safeguarding Children Policy and encouraged individual clubs to have their own, if necessary.

Action Point (BJ / LB) – Draw up a draft Safeguarding Children Policy for the start of the 2017 – 2018 season.

5.3 County Secretary (KG)

A quiet year; KG had answered a couple of enquiries received during the year and had also sent in updated details of Committee Members to the ECF to include in the 2017 Yearbook. KG had also arranged a SCCA Committee Meeting earlier in 2017 and had circulated Minutes to Committee Members and Club Secretaries.

5.4 Treasurer (AS)

AS had produced a report of the SCCA finances for the year ended 31 May 2017 and went through some of the main points.

The county had made a surplus of £248 (2016: £195) with approximately £1,800 in the SCCA bank account (including £393 being held on behalf of Suffolk Juniors). Team fees had been maintained for 2016 – 2017 at £16.

The current ECF membership scheme operated well due to efficient recording of members and their game results by DW (and captains of teams playing in Suffolk).

The ECF are making changes to the collection of game fees next year; this will involve the introduction of £25 to be charged when any non-member has played four games in the League competitions.

No equipment was purchased during the year. No public liability insurance is in place as there are currently no tournaments being held to which non-members of clubs in the Suffolk League are taking part.

As mentioned above, £393 is currently being held for Suffolk Juniors and with the appointment of a Suffolk Junior Organiser, AS thought the future looked brighter for this money to be utilised.

Three County teams were entered into inter-County competitions; the EACU levy remained at £65. The U120 team did not play any matches and AS was unsure if there was any possibility of the recovery of the entrance fee for that competition.

Provision has been made for engraving trophies and purchasing Player of the Year trophies.

The 2016 SCCA accounts had been audited by Michael Clapham and the 2017 figures will be submitted to Michael in due course for his audit.

AS thanked other SCCA officers for making no claims for expenses during the year; the only expenses are postage costs.

AS had also produced a list of property valued for insurance purposes as at July 1993 or cost (total was just under £4,000) with details of the property and its current location, if known. BJ said he would discuss the possible locations of other property with AS after the AGM.

Action Point (BJ / AS) – Discuss the possible location of other SCCA property where the current whereabouts is not known.

5.5 Competitions Secretary (DG)

DG confirmed all competitions had been concluded and DW has sent most of the results for grading; just the Norfolk and Suffolk Cup Final results are to be sent off.

Manningtree had run away with the Division 1 and Division 3 titles but Division 2 saw a very close finish with the Saxmundham and Bury St Edmunds teams being separated by a tie-break after the former had incurred an ineligibility penalty.

Ipswich B were relegated from Division 1 and Stowmarket were relegated from Division 2.

The U125 and U145 Cup events were both closely fought with Ipswich Maybees winning the former and Manningtree winning the latter.

The lack of any definitive rules for the U145 event and the playing of the Suffolk section of the Norfolk and Suffolk Cup had caused some issues and regrettably, some unpleasantness which was both unfortunate and unnecessary.

DG will be standing down as Competitions Secretary at the end of the 2018 – 2019 season after five seasons but would continue to ensure that the SCCA had a robust rule book.

DG also suggested that the SCCA had a deputy in place by the end of the 2017 – 2018 season to allow that person to 'learn the ropes' and to ensure a smooth handover when DG steps down.

5.6 Results Secretary (DW)

DW confirmed all results had been submitted for grading with the exception of the Norfolk and Suffolk Cup Final as this had only just taken place.

Some of the Stowmarket Club Championship results that DW had sent in seem to have gone astray so the ECF Grading Administrator has been asked to investigate.

Sadly, Richard Haddrell passed away in September 2016; Richard had been the Grading Administrator for around eighteen years and since his passing, there has been two new Grading Administrators but things are still not running completely smoothly but DW was hopeful that July 2017 grades will be published at the end of that month.

DW mentioned there had been a problem with the results database which had been caused by an issue during a planned upgrade to a server by the web host, Zen

Internet, which had led to some data added before the update. Following remedial action by Zen, only a couple of results from a Norfolk club's internal competition were lost.

DW said he had previewed the results system now being developed by the ECF; the forms and menus are more modern and there is a lot of help information available. This new system is based on one being currently used by the Blackpool and Fylde Chess League; modifications are being made and this will be subject to a small scale trial for 2017 – 2018; currently it is not currently connected to the ECF Grading System. DW suggested if the trial was successful, the SCCA may need to decide in a couple of years whether this new records system will be adopted as there appears to be little in the way of checks being made on information being input as both Suffolk and Norfolk have quite complicated nomination systems which are policed by the current system being used.

DW also mentioned the new fee structure for membership to the ECF – details are on the ECF website.

DW had also done some analysis of results in the 2016 – 2017 season and advised the top performing player was John McAllister (15 points).

Based on grading, Manningtree had been expected to win Division 1 by 4 points (they had) with either Ipswich B or Ipswich D favourites to be relegated (Ipswich B ended up in bottom place).

In Division 2, Saxmundham had been expected to finish top by 1 point (ended up tied with Bury St Edmunds A, although had won the Division by tie break) with Bury St Edmunds D favourites for relegation (Stowmarket A ended up in bottom place).

In Division 3, Manningtree had been favourites to finish top (they had) with Bury St Edmunds E favourites to finish bottom (Felixstowe B ended up in that position).

5.7 Women's Chess Organiser (VA)

VA had prepared a summary and this was read out by KG.

There was little to report; despite the best efforts of VA, there were no other women playing regular chess in the Suffolk League although the outstanding Dagne Clutsyte does play for the County First Team.

There are some promising juniors and plenty of girls play chess at primary school age but sadly, few carry on as they get older.

There had been no SCCA Women's Chess Championship during 2016 – 2017 and VA had suggested a proposal to decide the Suffolk Women's Chess Champion based on performance at the annual Bury St Edmunds Chess Congress – to be discussed later at the AGM.

5.8 Correspondence Captain (BS)

BS had prepared a summary and this was read out by KG. Suffolk are currently in fourth place in the Sinclair Trophy table with five games in progress; were Suffolk to win two of these, there was an excellent chance that Suffolk would be promoted to the First Division as runners up.

First place had already been won by East Wales A (although this team appears to consist of only two registered players on any national or FIDE grading list).

BS asked players who are competing for Suffolk in the competition to confirm by the end of August 2017 whether they wish to play again in the 2017 – 2018 event.

BJ asked how players qualify to take part; JB confirmed there were no actual residential qualifications.

5.9 First Team Captain (JP)

JP had prepared a summary and this was read out by KG.

Suffolk qualified as runners up at the Union Stage and had been drawn to meet Worcestershire in the quarter-finals of the knockout phase; Suffolk had recorded a convincing 10½ – 5½ victory despite being slightly out graded over the sixteen boards.

In the semi-final, Suffolk were competing against Leicestershire on 10 June 2017 and there was the prospect of a Suffolk v Norfolk Final, dependent on both counties winning their matches.

JP said it was the fourth consecutive year that Suffolk had made at least the semi-final stage.

BJ said that everyone would be wishing the First Team success in their match with Leicestershire.

5.10 U160 Captain (BJ)

BJ had prepared a report and went through the main points.

Suffolk had finished top at the Union Stage with 10 match points out of a possible 12 (5 matches won, 1 match lost) with 57½ game points. In the quarter-final of the knockout stage, Suffolk was up against Lancashire and unfortunately, had narrowly lost by a score of 7 – 9.

27 players competed for Suffolk during the season and 7 played in all 7 matches.

Phil Hutchings and Ed Kirkham had both scored 4½ / 7.

Keith Woodcock had scored 5 / 5.

Harold Thomas had scored 3½ / 7 (all draws!).

5.11 U120 / U100 County Teams

No matches had been played during the 2016 – 2017 season.

5.12 Cup and Plate Organiser (RS)

RS said both competitions had gone smoothly and it was good to have seen a Division 2 team (Saxmundham A) reaching the final of the Cup.

A Division 3 team (Manningtree B) had won the Plate.

RS thanked everyone who had taken part in these events and said he hoped other teams from Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds would consider taking part in 2017 – 2018.

JB asked about the dates for the Finals as these had been pushed back; RS said he would like to play both Finals on the same evening at the same venue.

DG wondered how it would be possible to set a date for a Finals Night in advance. It was agreed this would need to be done after the semi-finals,

BJ said in the Bury Area Chess League, they set their Finals Night after the date of the last league match.

TM wondered if it might be a struggle to find a neutral venue. RS said he liked the idea of a Finals Night if it could be arranged. BJ thought it might be possible to rotate the Finals Night venue between clubs (possibly Ipswich / Bury Edmunds / Manningtree).

AL asked whether there were any reasons why there were only a relatively few teams from Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds competing. For the latter club, BJ thought some players had little motivation to play additional games as they were also playing in the BACL. For the former, TM said he would mention at the Ipswich Chess Club AGM, being held shortly.

6. Election of Officers

At this point, BS temporarily stood down to allow LB to advise the AGM that BJ was standing to continue to be SCCA President.

Proposed by DG. Seconded by RS. Vote – all in favour of BJ to remain as President.

LB handed back to BJ.

BJ advised that most existing SCCA Post Holders were willing to continue in 2017 – 2018; the new nominations for Post Holders were First Team Captain (SR) and Suffolk Junior Organiser (TK)

Vote – all in favour

BJ said volunteers were sought for U120 and U100 County Captains and encouraged attendees to the AGM to ask around at their clubs.

7. Trophies

BJ and KG presented trophies to the following –

Division 1 – Manningtree A

Division 2 – Saxmundham A

Division 3 – Manningtree B

Suffolk Cup – Manningtree A

Suffolk Plate – Manningtree B

Suffolk U125 Cup – Ipswich Maybees

Suffolk U145 Cup – Manningtree

Division 1 Player of the Year – Phil Hutchings (Manningtree)

Division 2 Player of the Year – John Feavoyour (Saxmundham)

Division 3 Player of the Year – Dominic Carter (Saxmundham)

8. Proposals

A number of amendments to the SCCA Competition Rules had been proposed. BJ distributed a table showing the current rule and the proposed rule with the reason for the proposal.

BJ invited DG to talk through the proposals -

- 8.1 (Rule Number A1.7) – Proposed Rule:

*In Round 1 all teams will be seeded according to their League placement at the end of the previous season, unless there are significant changes to their strength. **Any team that is new to the league will usually be seeded below current teams.***

Reason for change – clarification what is meant by 'new'.

Vote – all in favour of proposed rule change.

- 8.2 (Rule Number n/a) – Proposed Rule

See item 8.7 which covers all grade limited competitions.

- 8.3 (Rule Change 1.5) – Proposed Rule

In all SCCA competitions the away team has White on the odd-numbered boards.

Reason for change – rationalising all SCCA competitions.

DG said an issue had arisen during the U125 Cup in the 2016 – 2017 season; in some matches, colours had been determined by the toss of a coin and in others, colours had followed the League rules. The proposed rule change would clarify that in all SCCA competitions, the away team would have White on boards 1, 3 and 5 (if applicable).

LB asked if this applied to the Finals of the Knock Out competitions as these could be at a neutral venue and BJ wondered how you could determine the away team in such circumstances. LB said he would not want this determined by the toss of a coin; EK suggested possibly the team with the lowest grading should be classed as the away team. TM suggested in the event of a neutral venue, there should be a toss of a coin and this would decide which team was the away one. LB asked if this was adopted, it would be the only fixture where teams would not know colours in advance. BJ said he was happy with this suggestion and suggested this amendment was added to the proposed rule.

Vote – all in favour subject to the suggestion confirming the process to determining the away team if a neutral venue was being used.

- 8.4 (Rule 1.2) – Proposed Rule

*The Competitions Secretary, in consultation with the Committee, is permitted to reformat **any SCCA competition** to reflect any changes in the numbers of clubs that are entered.*

Reason for change – To enable the Competitions Secretary to change the format of any SCCA competition.

Vote – all in favour of proposed rule change.

- 8.5 (Rule 1.2) – Proposed Rule

*The Competitions Secretary is responsible for....**the compilation of the fixtures list.***

Reason for change – To reflect current practice.

Vote – all in favour of proposed rule change.

- 8.6 (Rule 5.2) – Proposed Rule

*Nominations can be changed during a three week period following the publication of the mid-season grades, by notifying the Competitions Secretary. **After this three week period, no more renominations will be accepted for the rest of the season.***

Reason for change – To restore the control that was core to the original thinking around the need to restrict renominations. The new wording is designed to prevent renomination towards the end of the season where there might be the potential for abusing the rules to improve a team's chances of winning their division or avoiding relegation.

There was a discussion around what constituted a 'material change'. DG confirmed he wanted to restrict renominations to prevent any possible abuse of this process. BJ went through an example of how this change would work in practice.

Vote – all in favour of proposed rule change.

- 8.7 (Rule A2.1) – Proposed Rule

The Competitions Secretary will decide the exact format of these events depending on the number of teams entered. Teams will consist of four players, all with a standard grade that is less than an agreed grade as published in the summer grading list. In the event of a knockout phase/ phases, the Competitions Secretary will perform the draw and assign any byes by drawing lots.

Reason for change – To provide a common rule for any grade-limited competition without the need for a new set of rules to be agreed at an AGM or EGM.

There was a discussion around the exact wording to be used and a slightly amended Proposed Rule was suggested –

The Competitions Secretary will decide the exact format of these events depending on the number of teams entered. Teams will consist of four players, all with a standard grade as published in the summer grading list that is less than an agreed grade. In the event of a knockout phase/ phases, the Competitions Secretary will perform the draw and assign any byes by drawing lots.

Vote – all in favour of the amended Proposed Rule.

- 8.7 (Rule A2.3) – Proposed Rule

In the event of a tie in a knockout or final match, the competition will be decided by a) the greater number of game wins b) elimination of the bottom boards until a result is obtained c) selecting the team with the lowest aggregate grades d) toss of a coin.

Reason for change – to improve tie breaks.

EK asked if this would apply to all grade limited knockout SCCA competitions; DG confirmed it would. There was a further discussion around the league rules for splitting tie breaks and it was felt there needed to be some consistency. BJ said that if one of the Cup events became a knock out event, a rule would be needed to cover this scenario. It was confirmed this Rule only covers the U125 and U145 events as these are currently the only grade limited events in Suffolk. SL asked about the 2 – 2 scenario and there was further discussion around what should happen in the event of a default on any of the boards.

A minor amendment to the Proposed Rule was then discussed –

In the event of a tie, the competition will be decided by a) the greater number of game wins b) elimination of the bottom boards until a result is obtained c) selecting the team with the lowest aggregate grades d) toss of a coin.

Vote – all in favour of the amended Proposed Rule.

It was also agreed that a new Rule A2.4 needed to be added to clarify the procedure for splitting tie breaks in other competitions.

9. Adoption of incremental timings for 2017 – 2018

A proposal had been made in respect of introducing incremental timings as the default for Division 1 matches in the 2017 – 2018 season.

In Division 1, incremental ('Fischer') timing will be trialled as the default method of time control with each player having 70 minutes for the game plus an increment of 15 seconds for every move. The standard timings as listed in Rule 2.3a can only be used if both players agree. A review will be carried out at the end of the season to assess how this trial has gone.

Reason for change – the use of incremental timings is becoming standard in many leagues and tournaments and most clubs have the necessary clocks to enable such timings to be used.

TM asked whether the proposed time control would apply in non league events, BJ confirmed it would not, only Division 1 of the Suffolk League.

DW asked about the trial period. It was agreed that it would be reviewed at the end of the 2017 – 2018 season and if it was found to be unworkable, it would be abandoned and would review to standard time control.

BJ confirmed it would only be the default in Division 1 so would apply to Ipswich, Manningtree, Saxmundham and Bury St Edmunds teams. Lots of competitions and events use incremental timings and do have the advantage of eliminating the two-minute rule which was confusing for players and captains.

JF said he also played in the BACL where incremental timings are used, and found the games seemed to be much quicker than standard timings; he confirmed he preferred the current Suffolk League time controls. The comparison with the use of incremental timings in the 4NCL was not entirely comparable due to the much longer time allowed for games in the 4NCL and JF said he did not enjoy playing in the BACL so much.

AL suggested that chess required a combination of mental skills and calculation and in quick play finishes, these tended to be replaced by a test of reactionary speed; now the technology existed to use incremental timings, he thought it was correct to take advantage.

BJ confirmed the increment would be 15 seconds per move; the 4NCL uses 30 seconds per move.

TM said he was not keen on the introduction of incremental time limits. He agreed that the game should move on but said he found the system rather confusing and thought standard time limits were more straightforward. He wondered how long a game could go on for using incremental timings.

BJ said it was roughly comparable with standard time limits and in his experience in the BACL, he did not know of any game lasting more than 3 hours.

TM asked what happened if an illegal move was made. BJ confirmed it was the same rule and 2 minutes would be added to the opponent's time. A second illegal move would lead to the loss of the game.

TM asked how the additional 2 minutes would be added and BJ said he could demonstrate. BJ also confirmed that if a player got down to under 5 minutes, he was able to stop recording moves and there was no need to restart recording should the increment result in their clock going back to more than 5 minutes left.

AP said he had discussed the issue of introducing incremental timings with other Ipswich Chess Club members and they were mostly willing to give it a try for a season to see how things went.

BJ said he had heard from Ian Wallis who had suggested a slightly different time control of 75 minutes + 15 seconds per move, this would give a little more time for players.

JB asked if there was the option of two separate time controls; BJ confirmed there would just be the one.

SL thought the purpose of the proposed change was to improve the standard of the game.

RS said he had initially been against incremental timings but after using them at county matches, he had amended his view but wondered whether Division 1 players should have a vote to make the decision.

AP asked if Division 2 and Division 3 teams could try the incremental timing; BJ confirmed they would be able to but would only be the default in Division 1.

LB said he was in favour of 75 minutes + 15 seconds per move.

TM proposed the default in Division 1 would become 75 minutes + 15 seconds per move, seconded by LB.

A vote was taken and this was agreed.

Any club who thought there might be an issue with a potential late finish after the venue was closing could look at starting the match slightly earlier.

10. Women's Chess

VA had proposed the post of Women's Chess Organiser be abolished; the lack of female players meant there was little in the way to organise.

DW thought the post should be kept; BJ agreed and thought even if there was little actual organising to do, the post holder could make proposals and be a named point of contact. JF agreed it was a good idea to try and keep the post.

It was agreed the post of Women's Chess Organiser be kept and a volunteer would be sought.

VA had also suggested a proposal to award the Suffolk Ladies Cup to the Suffolk lady who scored the most points in the Open Section of the Bury St Edmunds Chess

Congress (provided a minimum score of 3/5 points had been achieved). Should no lady reach that score in the Open, the same criteria would be used in the Major, then the Intermediate and finally the Minor. The criteria for a Suffolk lady would be by birth in the county, residence in the county or membership to an affiliated club to the SCCA.

This proposal was discussed. DW thought there was a possible risk of losing track of the trophy. Would it be easy to tell who was qualified as a Suffolk lady? SL said that applications for the Congress had a box for place of birth.

BJ said in the past, the Suffolk Ladies Cup had been usually played for as a 5 round event and said he saw no pressing reason to change this. EK suggested the lady with the most points in the league could qualify. DW said that although Dagne has played for the Suffolk County first team, she was not actually affiliated to a club in the SCCA. JF agreed there should be a competition held to award the trophy and not to use the Bury Congress to determine the Suffolk Ladies Champion; BJ said even if there was no organiser, the Committee should be able to arrange an event should there be sufficient players.

It was agreed that a volunteer for the post would be sought and if there was enough players, the Committee would try to arrange an event.

11. Norfolk & Suffolk Cup

Three clubs had entered the 2016 - 2017 Suffolk qualification event (Ipswich, Manningtree and Bury St Edmunds) and this had caused the potential of a three way tie with all three clubs finishing on the same number of points.

There was a discussion on how this event could be run in the 2017 – 2018 season; Manningtree suggested that if three clubs entered again, an all-play-all should be used. Ipswich – not involved in any discussion but thought that seemed to be reasonable.

If four clubs entered, it was thought a knock out format should be used.

It was agreed that if three clubs entered in 2017 – 2018, the format would be an all play all and if four clubs entered in 2017 – 2018, the format would be a knock out.

BJ asked JF is there was any possibility that Saxmundham might enter a team; JF said he would ask but realistically, he suspected not. DW mentioned that in the past, Adastral had entered a team.

The question of how to split a potential tie break was then discussed at some length.

LB said the current method was laid down at Rule A3.3.

BJ said that currently the primary method was the elimination of the bottom board result.

TM wondered if it was possible to harmonise the rules for running this event with those relating to the U125 and U145 Cup events. BJ also thought this might be worthy of consideration and proposed that the same format was used to split ties as it appeared that if those rules were used for the Norfolk & Suffolk Cup, they would cover both knock out or league format and would offer some flexibility.

LB thought that if three teams tied, the elimination of the bottom board result may not always be appropriate.

BJ said he thought it might be appropriate for the three clubs likely to enter a team to put their heads together before the start of the event to discuss the issue further.

LB suggested a possible tie break split could be decided by the team having the lowest aggregated grading over all games played..

If all matches finished 3 – 3, the winner could be the team with the lowest aggregated grading.

It was felt that ideally the strongest team should represent Suffolk in the Final.

AL said he thought it was a good idea for the three clubs likely to contest the event in Suffolk to decide what the tie break process should be.

LB said he would rather try and resolve this at the AGM as part of a formal process. His suggestion was to use the lowest aggregated gradings over all games provided. This led to some discussion around possible defaulting; it was felt that where a default happened, the average gradings could be reached by total grading divided by the number of players. JF thought that defaulting should result in penalisation. DG suggested average grading not to count the default and the lowest aggregate grade of all players who played in the match.

As the Ipswich captain was not present, it was also thought a decision might not be able to be reached.

BJ then proposed the rules should follow that of the grade limited events and then the rules for splitting tie breaks could be agreed outside the AGM but several attendees thought that there was a need to follow the SCCA Constitution.

The attendees were asked to vote on a proposal to use the same rules for the U125, U145 and Norfolk & Suffolk Cup; a quick show of hands showed most, but not all, were in favour.

LB asked for some clarification about what was actually being agreed. BJ confirmed it was to run the three events along the same lines but to offer some flexibility. The tie break would only be needed if all three matches finished 3 – 3.

LB said it was possible to have two winners but only one club could play in the Final. BJ agreed a two way tie might be easier to resolve.

SL wondered if the tie break could be split along the same process as that in the league events – number of match wins, results against each other and then a play off.

LB proposed a three way tie would be decided by the team with the lowest aggregated grading over both matches without defaulting on any board. A two-way tie should be split using league rules.

A vote on these proposed tie break deciders was taken and these were agreed.

12. Teams for 2017 – 2018

Clubs had been asked for an initial indication of how many teams they intended to enter into competitions –

Ipswich – 7 (would be discussed at the Club AGM the following week)

Stowmarket – 1

Felixstowe – 2 (league and U125 / U145, possibly Cup / Plate but not N & S Cup)

Sudbury – 1 (league and Cup)

Manningtree – 3 (league), 2 (Cup), 2 (Plate) and N & S Cup / U125

Bury St Edmunds – to be advised but possibly around the same number

Saxmundham – to be advised but possibly around the same number

AP had been looking at the possibility of a new club starting in Ipswich but advised that this would not now be happening for the time being.

Not sure about Clacton's intentions and there was a likelihood that the new Woodbridge club would enter a team into Division 3.

DG confirmed the deadline for advising him of definite numbers is 31 July 2017.

13. Any other business

None

TM thanked all the Committee members for their work over the past year.

The AGM finished at 22:14. Following this, BJ took some photographs of the various trophy winners.